Rt. 12, Frederick, Md. 21701
6/17/77

United Press International
National Press Bldg., 14 & F NW
Washington, D.C.

Dear UPI,

Your A274 out of Dallas 6/11 is factually incorrect in the first two grafs. I have received a copy in today's mail, from one of your subscribers.

You will observe no direct quote in these grafs. The direct quotes that follow were used in another context in that WFAA interview.

I did not believe there was a conspiracy to knock Ray off in the escape attempt and in fact long in advance perdicted with complete accuracy how he would be recaptured. When Ray was charged with escape attempts in 1971 I then told him the hounds would get him in the 20-foot brambles not uncommon in that area unless he had someone waiting with a car. (In the absence of a waiting auto - a bus would have been required for those who made the attempt - the only other possibility of getting away was if a slow freight of coal cars went past.) I have known those mountains since 1938, when I walked in them every morning for months. On my many trips to see Ray I had ample opportunity to observe that they had not changed.

All the people with whom I associated in Dallas last week and early this week know my views well, as do a large number of reporters who located me by phone, as your reporter made no effort to do.

The fact that with seven making the attempt Ray was not shot at is ample disproof of the nuttiness that permeates this field. If there had been such a conspiracy it is obvious Ray would have been killed on the ladder.

The WFAA people wanted me to say what you attribute to me but I would not say it. And did not. There is nothing in the statements of Revs. Abernathy and Jackson with which I agree or then did agree. Any reading of the Washington Post or the New York times in recent months would have told you if not your Dallas office of this. In fact on ABC's Good Morning America this past Wednesday I took direct, pointed and angry issue with all this hysteria and irrationality.

Even the line attributed to me in the story about the planning is opposite what I have said consistently. I know Jimmy and the other Rays. It was and is my belief that he did not do the planning on this escape.

I can understand that UPI is innocent in this. although I do believe your Dallas reporter should have asked me personally before accepting what is an obvious and normal station puff.

This is all harmful to me. I seek to be as accurate as is possible and am one of the extremely few in this field who avoids conjectures and theorizing. These things have a way of being quoted indefinitely and improvised upon. I do not expect UPI to do a correcting story but I would appreciate it if you would let your subscribers know of these inaccuracies so that those who have morgues can file and in the future be aware of the error.

May I also suggest that with the expertise attributed to me with incomplete accuracy (Ray has not fired me) your Dallas reporter might have had a few questions to ask, guidance to seek, etc., when I was right there.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg